[P. 100b] Wukchumni

231 chumni people. Fox (adja) and wildcat (tunəd) "may have been somebody's poša," but M.L. could not connect them with any known family. She did not know whether the Waksachi had totemic animals or not, but claimed that Gawia, Telamni, and "everybody down this way" had them. The Wukchumni, Gawia, and Yokod chiefs all had Eagle as their family animal; M.L. was uncertain if this held for the Tachi.

Redemption of totem animal.---When eagles, 825 bears, or coyotes were killed it was necessary 782 that a propitiatory ceremony be held to ensure 432 the continued good will of the animals. There was an ill-defined but firm belief that all animals existed "somewhere," that any member of the species that was killed returned to this supernatural place and reported on the treatment which it had received when killed. Should an unfavorable report be made, ill would betide the killer, and the animals would no longer permit themselves to be victims of human hunters. This was the basis of all hunting formulae. The deer, however, was not totemic, and its propitiation was only the duty of the hunter. But eagles, bears, and coyotes were totems and it was the function of the lineages for which they were symbols to redeem them from their killers. These animals were feared not only for their physical prowess but for their supernatural powers.

J.P. described the ritual for bears and 825 eagles.
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539 If a man killed a bear, he would take it 432 to a man who had Bear for poša. If the animal had been killed close by, the whole carcass would be carried to the Bear man's home. Usually it was far away, so the hunter just cut off the bear's feet and put them in a basket. Then he took this, some other baskets, and a blanket and went to the Bear man's home. The blanket was laid down before the door; the basket containing the feet was placed in the center and the other baskets ranged behind it.

The house chosen was that of the head of the Bear lineage who was usually the oldest Bear man and a Bear dancer. He sent a winatum to gather other members of the Bear lineage. When they saw what was there, "they went and got food, money, and baskets and traded with the hunter for the bear's feet and other things with it." The head Bear man go the feet and used the claws for a necklace. When the skin was brought he would buy that too. The skin included the head but not the skull. The skin would be tanned for use either as a blanket or for the Bear Dance costume. "It had the hair and ears left on and sure looked pretty!" While he was buying these things the Bear man "talked to the bear: he told it to be good, not to run after anyone, nor to kill people." Sometimes the other people cried while he was doing this.

825 It was incumbent upon the Bear people to 782 redeem their poša. "The buyer would get broke 432 while the hunter made lots of money." Then the hunter's people would have a big feast, for

825 782 432 they got the meat as well as the money since the pošam could not eat it. No special disposal was made of the carcass, according to this informant, a statement which I have always thought dubious.[237]

825 782 539 432 "Eagle was worse. If a man killed an eagle he must take it to the tia'a or he'd die right away, because Eagle would get mad." Then all the chief's relatives would gather to pay for their totem; a winatum called them to come. All the tia'a's people cried when they saw that dead bird. Since there were sometimes two or three chiefly men in a village they would divide the buying, thus, one would buy the wing feathers, another the leg bones, and another the down. Then the killer of the eagle ate the meat. "The chief would not let those people gathered there go away until all the meat was eaten." When the killer had finished, the chief took the eagle's carcass and buried it in water so that it would be revived and return to its supernatural home. As he did this he said, "tundi'ta po'dta ma tupu'nita" (? ? you go up). This was the same phrase used by a hunter when he had killed game.

825 782 432 The same thing was done with a coyote carcass. It was taken to a Coyote elder who called his people to pay for it. The coyote lay on a Blanket, the people threw down their strings of money over it, and cried. If the hide were wanted for a Coyote clown costume, it would be skinned, but if not, the Coyote man "buried the whole thing right then because nobody ate that meat."

825 Totemic animals and associated professions.---J.P. and M.P. named a list of totemic animals and their associated professions.

Rattlesnake: for rattlesnake shaman who made the Rattlesnake Ritual
Bear (both black and brown): for Bear Dancers
Cougar: for chiefs who might have this in addition to Eagle
Eagle: for all chiefs
Dove: for all winatums
Coyote: "always clowns"
Trout: only one person [Henry Lawrence] known to have this as a family emblem
Raven: ceremonial manager
Crow [blackbird (?), aduwuts]: J.P.'s maternal grandmother had this; no profession

Neither informant ever heard of anyone having deer as poša (though he could be a dream-helper). Everyone ate deer, all kinds of [262] squirrels and rodents, woodpeckers and other birds. No person killed or ate any portion of his totem animal.

These are all the totemic animals these informants could recall for Wukchumni people. They believed that the Gawia, Yokod, and other tribes had the same family totems: "they were

[237] See, for instance, Heizer and Hewes, 592 ff.

[P. 109 a] Wukchumni

787 776 778 [237] dream occurred, the dreamer rose and went away from surrounding dwellings to talk to his dream helper, which was usually an animal or bird. He took eagle down with him and sprinkled it over little oak trees. Nothing was seen [no "vision"] during this interlude; it was merely a prayerful acknowledgment of the previous dream appearance of the helper, with a request for continued assistance. S.G. said that the dreamer should repeat this exit from the house about every half-hour after waking from the dream; other informants said that once was sufficient. The real point was that the dreamer should not fall asleep again; probably some found it necessary to remain active lest sleep overcome them. If one fell asleep and the dream were forgotten, it would not only be "lost," but the helper would be so deeply offended it would never come again, or might even cause sickness. The day following the dream the dreamer fasted entirely and went off to some secluded spot to continue his prayerful contacts with his tutelary. A few puffs of smoke might be taken at that time.

[788] All persons with supernatural power, and those respectful to this cosmic force, tapni, spoke prayerfully to the sun, moon, and morning star when they first saw them each day.

J.P. and M.P. described the procedure of seeking and dealing with supernatural power.

[237 432] If a man wanted to live long or wished for other benefits, he would go to a chief and buy some eagle down (čayi). (He could resell all or any part of this if he wished.) Some winter night, no matter how cold, he would go off to a distant hilltop. He wore no clothes and went about midnight. Before starting he chewed a little tobacco and then spat it out. At the hilltop he would scatter eagle down and in a standing posture "talk to those two tia'as" (Eagle and Wolf [sic; Mountain Coyote]). He would enumerate all those things which he did not want to happen to him and all those which he did want. He stayed and talked this way for about thirty minutes; Eagle or Wolf would reply.

[423] No fasting preceded such an expedition and there was no particular name for the spot where the prayers were made. A chief usually went repeatedly to the same place, which by general consent was known to be his and avoided. Women occasionally sought help in this manner but would not go so far from their home as men. The preferred time for seeking supernatural aid was in midwinter "about Christmas time during the bad month" and it was only done once a year.[250] (It was at this time that youths were forced to rise and bathe in icy water at night.) If the seeker passed a stream of water on the way

[250] Reminiscent of the midwinter spiritual period of certain northwestern tribes (cf. Spier, Klamath Ethnography, 260, 266; Ray, Cultural Relations, 102 ff.).

[during the puberty and initiation ceremony]
Analyst

1: Gayton E-5 (1925-1930) 1948 NS29 Yokuts NS29
[P. 232 a] Western Mono NS25

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Redemption of Totem Animals, Aerie Ownership

Ritualistic payment was tendered for the killing of eagles, falcons, bears, and occasionally coyotes.

Eagle.--Eagles were not often killed although, according to both B.O. and S.O., it was not thought dangerous to do so, nor was it necessary to have permission from the chief if the eagle were a stray one. An eagle known to belong to a chief's aerie would not be killed. However, said S.O., "When a man killed an eagle, he took it to a chief -- Eagle is chief." The chief then sent out word, and everyone, regardless of his poša, came to make a payment to the hunter. The chief contributed a larger sum than the rest, but it was he who came into possession of the bird and kept or sold its valuable parts. The head, skin, and leg bones had ceremonial uses as talismans of supernatural power: the head as it was, the skin for its down, and the bones for whistles (sic). Wing feathers were used on arrows. (The same parts of falcons were similarly used.) When the chief resold these items, he made a slight profit. Both S.O. and B.O. agreed that neither Michahai nor Waksachi honored the carcass with a special burial in earth or water.

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Live eagles and falcons were the subject of redemption more often than were dead specimens. B.O. said people would get young eagles to rear in order to sell them eventually to chiefs. "When a chief heard of a person having one somewhere he would send his winatum to have it brought over." As soon as the day of its arrival was known, the chief ordered all the people with Eagle ibuk (poša, totem) to assemble. They came dressed in their best, stood in a long line, and danced while the eagle was held by its owner. A blanket was then put on the ground and the bird set upon it. The chief who was redeeming the bird had a large basket of beads and perhaps a rabbitskin blanket or other valuables. The other people filed past the bird, each one throwing down a handful of beads on the blanket. Finally the chief put down his basket of beads and gifts and took up the bird saying, "That is my ibuk." The former owner then took up his pay. There was no weeping.

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The eagle was then kept "by the chief and his family as long as it wanted to stay." It was fed fresh raw meat daily. B.O.'s father had one: it would go off each year and come back for a while; finally it never returned.

For the same procedure with living birds, S.O. stated that "when the birds were grown they were given [sic] to some neighboring chief, like Wukchumni or anywhere." When the owner was ready to dispose of his bird, he sent his winatum to notify the chief whom he had determined upon as the recipient. If the offer was

accepted, he took the bird down[167] and was given a paying ceremony as described above (see also Wukchumni, Tachi). The purchasing chief could keep, resell, or free the bird at his will.

Accessible eagle and falcon aeries were owned by chiefs,[168] and the young birds taken from them each year. S.O. described the procedure of his father, Kɨlmi šɨt, winatum, and the chief, Pao'ɨč, at Tušao.

In the rocks on the steep hillside above Tušao there was a kini' hawk's (Duck Hawk, the peregrine falcon) nest. The young hatched about March. Each spring the chief and his winatum went to get them. Although Pao'ɨč was an old man, it was he, rather than the winatum, Kɨlmišɨt, who climbed down over the edge of the bluff. He had a rope of ho' tied around his waist, and Kɨlmišɨt stood above, holding the other end. The nest was in a crevice about forty feet below the top of the rocks and about one hundred feet above the little valley bottom. When Pao'ɨč reached the nest he jerked the rope as a sign that he was safe. He had a deerskin, in which he wrapped the one or two small birds, and put them on his back in a carrying net slung from his shoulders. The old birds usually came back, scolding and making feints at the intruder. Then the chief would talk to the birds, telling them what was to be done with their children, how they were to be honored, and so on. At the same time he would be calling upon his supernatural powers for aid: "Pao'ɨč was helped by all his ainɨč." Then the old man would jerk the rope and Kɨlmišɨt would help hoist him up.

The little falcons were too young to fly off. They were kept in the house for a while, but as they grew bigger they were put out in near-by trees where they sat or flew off a little as they pleased. Pao'ɨč and Kɨlmišɨt "had to go out every day to hunt fresh meat for the birds."

There was another hawk's nest about a quarter-mile farther up the cañon. This was a tua'kini', "who went off at night but stayed home all day,"[169] but its young were not taken.

Bear.--Bears were given ritual redemption, but only members of Bear lineages were called upon to pay. When the headman of a Bear lineage, who was usually an elderly man who had acquired dream power from Bear [i.e., he was not merely a plain lineage member] learned that a bear had been brought in to a village, he assembled his people. The head, paws and claws,

[167] The route was usually downward, i.e., plainwards, as the eagles were more prized at a distance from the hills.

[168] I failed to discover how these were inherited, whether they went with the chiefly office or to a natural heir who was not necessarily the succeeding chief.

[169] The identification of tua'kini' is uncertain; as a hero in Eastern Mono mythology he equates with the Yokuts Falcon who may be either the Prairie Falcon or Duck Hawk. The true night hawk is not supposed to occur in California.

and skin of the animal were laid on a blanket, and the Bear pošam formed a line and threw money on the blanket as they filed by. However, the Bear headman received only the paws or claws. The animal's head and teeth were thrown away. The hunter himself still retained the bearskin which he might give, but could not sell, to a Bear pošam; he could not give it to anyone else (S.O.). But according to B.O., the skin was sold or could be obtained by the Bear headman through the redemption process. In either case the hunter kept the carcass, the meat of which he was free to eat or give away.

Bear cubs were sometimes reared, but they were never given a ritual redemption as were young eagles. They could be sold to anyone, usually westward to plains people. B.O. himself once had a little cub which he "took away off and turned loose when he was big enough to look after himself."

Coyote.---Coyotes were rarely killed. But a killed coyote could be taken to a man of a Coyote lineage, and some money would be given in return The skin might be used for a Coyote clown costume, but was not valued otherwise. Evidently coyote redemption was not a regular practice and, possibly because of its rarity as a lineage animal, was not a profitable one for the hunter.

Naturally, no killer was totemically attached to the animal killed. Also, for all totemic animals except the bear cubs, the redeemers felt it incumbent upon them to honor their dead totem by the ritual payment.

LIFE CYCLE

Birth and Infancy

There were no definite observances or proscriptions during pregnancy. Some women ate only soft food as a matter of personal preference. Some avoided doing heavy work, such as pounding acorns, during the last months. If the prospective mother's residence were patrilocal, the mother-in-law might do her work for her; if she were at home, one of her sisters might do all her work (S.O.). A woman who felt sick did not have to work, relatives of her own family would help her (D.) But D. added that there was no rule for this: convenience and circumstance determined the behavior of all persons concerned.

A pregnant woman was referred to as ča·n wit:p nuš (will be baby [?]), and the act of giving birth was called ax: diši. The woman remained in her own house where she lay on her back on a bed of mats during delivery. Two stakes to which she clung were driven into the ground on either side. Usually she had one woman assistant who might be any knowledgeable female relative of her own or husband's family. This midwife pressed the parturient around the